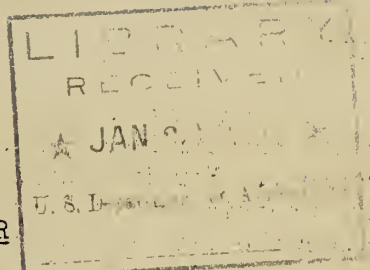


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THE HOUSEHOLD CALENDAR

A radio talk by Mrs. Rowena Schmidt Carpenter, Assistant to the Chief, Bureau of Home Economics, delivered through Station WRC and 32 other stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, January 3, 1930 at 1:10 p.m. Eastern Standard Time.

How do you do, Homemakers!

Today I want to remind you that this is the opportune time to take an inventory of the contents of your linen or household textiles closet, to make a list of the blankets, comforts, sheets, pillow cases, towels, table linen and the like that you need, and then take advantage of the January White Sales in replenishing household needs.

If your purchase records of past years have been kept in such a way that you can glance over the pages dealing with household textiles, you may be able to estimate at a glance what you need, especially if you have made notes on this record from time to time of the wear of articles. It is necessary to examine articles for wear even though they may not have had much use. Leaving sheets and table linen folded and stacked on shelves or in drawers for some time may cause wear and finally splitting on the creased edges. For this reason it is desirable to mark the date of purchase directly on the article, and rotate linens in their storage place so that the wear will be fairly distributed between the old and the new. Just a word about marking. The date of purchase, and even the size and brand or trade name of an article can be inconspicuously written with indelible marking ink put up especially for household purposes. The under side of the hem of sheets is a convenient place for such a record. For some articles it may be more satisfactory to make the record on a small linen tape which can be sewed on at an inconspicuous place. It is extremely desirable to know the date of purchase and the brand of articles in order to check up on their wearing qualities, in building up intelligent experience as the purchasing agent for the household.

Having determined the needs of the year in household textiles, the next step is to approach the sales with caution and intelligence. It is unfortunate that the descriptions used in connection with advertising are not always dependable. As homemakers we must know quality with reference to price or we are likely to be lead astray by the attractive advertising of special sales. A high price is not necessarily an indication of superior quality, nor is a so-called "well-known" brand necessarily the best to buy. "Well-known" may mean only well advertised, and a high price may be due in large measure to the cost of advertising widely, or to the novelty or the popularity of the product, though it is true that many mills have established a reputation for articles or fabrics of uniformly good quality, and their trade mark on goods mean something definite to the user. Until fabrics are standardized in quality, labeled in accordance with these standards, and we as consumers are given an understanding of what standard labels mean in quality, we must depend upon the reputation that lies behind a trade name, upon the reliability of the dealer whose word we often take for the quality of the article he sells us, and upon our own ability to discriminate in values which we must build up through experience.

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If you have newly come into responsibility as a homemaker, the purchasing agent for your household, you will do well to make a special study of your problems. For instance, in buying such articles as sheets, you must consider both the size and the quality of the material with reference to cost. And remember the size quoted on ready made sheets is the torn unfinished rather than the hemmed size. So it is that a 90 inch length is very inadequate as a protection to the blankets and comforts against body perspiration and grease. The 99 inch length is much more desirable for many beds, but there are homemakers and hotel people who feel that nothing shorter than 108 inches is adequate for proper tucking under the mattress and over the covers. Remember, too, that new fabrics are sometimes so heavily dressed with starch or other adhesives that they seem much heavier and firmer in weave than they prove to be after laundering. Rubbing the material between the hands vigorously to remove the dressing, or better still washing a sample, will show up the amount of filling. It is important also to examine the weave to see if the threads are firmly and evenly spun and finely and evenly woven.

There are other simple, practical examinations that can be made of linen and damask, of blankets, and each household textile in turn. Books have been written to help the homemaker select various household textiles wisely. Your librarian will be glad to put you in touch with such references. Our own Bureau has Farmers Bulletin 1449 on the selection of cotton fabrics to help you with a few of your purchasing problems.

And now I bid you goodbuy, Homemakers, until next Friday.